

## Suggestions Regarding Capitol Hill Visits

- Be polite, be as specific as possible, prepare and never threaten.
- Be concise, but cover all the points you wish to make. In general, it is best to address a limited number of issues (3 maximum). Try to make all your points in less than thirty minutes.
- Explain why the issue is important to you and people in your district/ state. Speak from your personal experience and illustrate your point with real people and examples, if possible. Explain the consequences adverse action or failure to act will have on individuals in your state, city or town.
- If possible, cite sources of independent support for your position (opinion polls, experts, etc.)
- After you make your points, request specific action and don't be afraid to ask the legislator's position. If they are undecided, ask them to inform you by mail on the decision and why they took the position.
- Don't be concerned if you end up meeting with staff rather than your Member of Congress. In many cases, this can prove to be equally or more effective.
- Leave your name, address, affiliation and telephone number with the Member or staff. Thank them for taking time to meet with you.
- Follow-up the visit with a letter thanking the Member or staff for their time and briefly summarizing the major concerns you discussed. Include any additional information requested.
- Maintain communications with the Member or staff through occasional correspondence and visits to the local/state office.
- **Establish a relationship!**